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ABSTRACT

A program of basic language/writing skills was designed to enhance the literacy levels of 24 multicultural seniors, aged 65 or older, who were recruited from senior centers throughout Erie County, Pennsylvania. Computer literacy and basic word processing skills were taught along with basic language/writing skills in a nonthreatening learning environment. A curriculum was written and instructional materials developed using state-of-the-art computers and software. Instructional activities were centered around the seniors' recollections of their past experiences. The recollections served as the core (medium) for stories to be reproduced on the computers. These stories were gathered into a bound chronicle of personal experiences. (Course outlines are provided for these courses: grammar, spelling, writing, and word processing. The 20-page report is followed by the chronicle of reminiscences and personal recollections on such topics as reading memories; hometown memories; personal favorites; family traditions; favorite toys, games, or amusements; what we did before TV; and clothing styles from childhood.) (YLB)

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EXPLORING THE PAST

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EXPLORING THE PAST
"A SENIOR LITERACY MODEL"
FINAL REPORT

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JULY 1, 1992 TO JUNE 30, 1993

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF ADULT EDUCATION
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

		PAGE
I.	ABSTRACT	1
II.	PURPOSE	2-4
III.	OBJECTIVES	4
IV.	TIME FRAME	4
V.	MANAGEMENT/STAFF	5
VI.	PROCEDURE	6
VII.	RESULTS OF PROJECT OBJECTIVES	8-10
IX.	COURSE OUTLINES	11-20

APPENDIX A -- CHRONICLE

TITLE: Exploring the Past

ADDRESS: GECAC Training Institute
1006 West Tenth Street
Erie, PA 16502

Phone: (814) 459-9859

Director: Lynne C. Burke

Funding: $9,000

Duration of Project:

From: 7/1/92 to 6/30/93

Number of Months: 12

OBJECTIVE: To increase by at least 1 grade level over the duration of the project the basic language/writing skills of seniors, aged 65 or older, as measured by the language sections of the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education).

DESCRIPTION: GECAC designed a program of basic language/writing skills that enhanced the literacy levels of seniors, age 65 or older. Computer literacy as well as basic word processing skills were taught along with basic language/writing skills in a non-threatening learning environment. A curriculum was written and instructional materials developed utilizing state-of-the-art computers and software. Instructional activities were centered around the seniors' recollections of their past experiences. The recollections served as the core (medium) for stories to be reproduced on the computers. These stories were gathered into a bound chronicle of personal experiences. The chronicle is available for use in Head Start classrooms throughout the state.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Multicultural seniors, age 65 or older, were recruited from GECAC/AAA senior centers throughout Erie County.

PRODUCT: A computer-based curriculum for senior instruction in basic language/writing skills and the chronicle of personal experiences.

DESCRIPTION: This program was designed to reinvest the seniors in lifelong learning. It is a common myth that learning ends with graduation. Many of today's senior population were forced by economic conditions into early withdrawal from formal educational experiences. This situation has diminished the quality of their later years because of their fear of formal learning situations. The computer revolution has only served to magnify this fear. This population feels they cannot deal with new technology such as computers and have developed a computer phobia.

Margaret Hellie Huyck in GROWING OLDER states: "Mental flexibility rather than mental rigidity is related to continuous learning and the ability to adapt to inevitable social changes. **Mental acuity is lost if not used."** The population to be served by this proposal has cut itself off from formal learning.

Recent research by Dr. Robert Butler, an expert in aging in the United States, determined that the unproductive human is at high risk of illness and economic dependency. The secret, Dr. Butler claims, to combatting "the decline" is to fight inactivity, challenge the mind, and help others as often as possible.

The senior population of today is living through an information revolution that is as mystifying to them as the Industrial Revolution was to their grandparents' generation. The last ten years have seen a proliferation of computers, fax

machines, computerized telephones, and even digitally operated microwaves. This onslaught of technology has intimidated many of today's senior generation and created widespread technological enigmas. A daily attendee at Erie East Senior Center recently commented that many months ago she received a VCR as a gift from her children. Unfortunately, because of her fear of this unfamiliar technology, she has not even learned how to turn the machine on. Beverly Hutchinson, the Senior Center Coordinator, confirmed that many seniors have had similar experiences. It is essential for our senior population to overcome these phobias to fully utilize and benefit from the new technology available to them today and thus improve their quality of life.

In an effort to break down these perceived barriers, GECAC Training Institute provided computer literacy/basic word processing skills instruction in conjunction with basic language/writing skills in a non-threatening learning environment.

Instructional activities were centered around the seniors' recollections of their past experiences. Classes were held at GECAC Training Institute, a Pennsylvania private licensed business school, which has a successful history of working with seniors through the Older Workers Job Training Placement Act program housed in GECAC. GECAC Training Institute has 12 state-of-the-art computers and the most up-to-date software available.

Participants in the GECAC senior centers have expressed an interest in helping others. Our program focused on producing a

non-threatening learning environment to help them flex their mental muscles. It also served others through the use of the seniors' recollections of personal experiences in selected Head Start classrooms.

OBJECTIVES:

1. A computer literacy/basic word processing skills curriculum was written and instructional materials developed by August 31, 1992.
2. Twenty-four multicultural seniors, age 65 or older were recruited from GECAC AAA centers in Erie County.
3. Basic language/writing literacy skills of seniors were increased by at least one grade level over the duration of the project as measured by the TABE.
4. The fear of new technology reduced by familiarizing the participants with state-of-the-art hardware and software.
5. The quality of the participants' lives improved by reinvesting the seniors in lifelong learning.
6. A bound chronicle of personal experiences was produced to be used in Head Start classrooms.

Time Frame:

Curriculum Development - July - August, 1992

Instruction

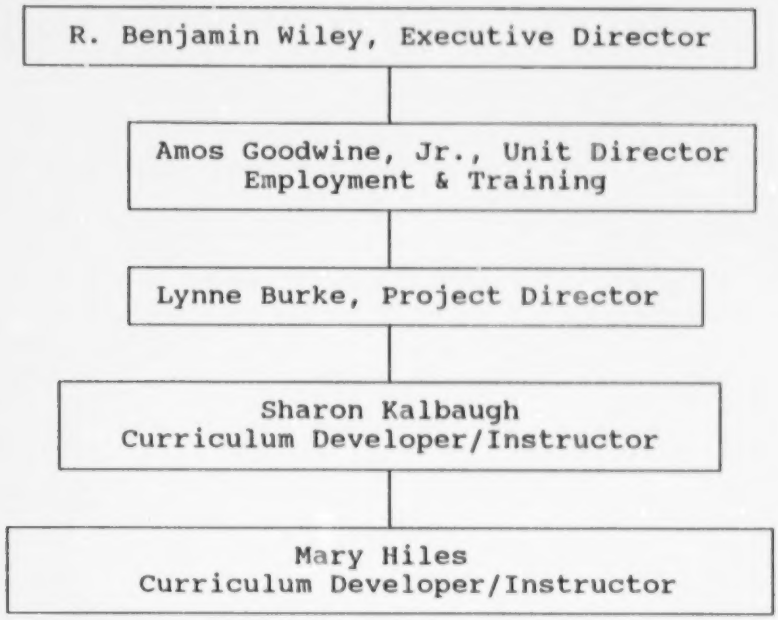
Session I - September - November, 1992

Session II - January - March, 1993

Evaluation and publication of chronicle

April - June, 1993

MANAGEMENT/STAFF:



PROCEDURE: A certified business education teacher who has experience working with this population was hired to develop the curriculum and teach the class. The teacher researched, gathered, and created instructional materials. During curriculum development, the teacher/developer will met with the director of GECAC Training Institute on a weekly basis to determine progress and to discuss any concerns. The teacher worked with the director of GECAC senior centers to recruit participants. Participants were recruited from the ten senior centers located throughout Erie county.

Each prospective participant was given the language sections of the TABE to determine their beginning literacy level. The curriculum was tailored to fit their average reading levels. A review of basic grammar and punctuation was given in order for the seniors to be more comfortable recording their narratives into written form. A basic introduction to computer operating systems and word processing demystified this new technology and eliminated computer phobia. This was a hands-on learning experience with each senior having access to his/her own personal computer. The group was encouraged to narrate personal stories of ethnic traditions that lend a flavor of yesteryear. These stories served as the core medium to be reproduced on the computers. With the sophisticated editing features found in WordPerfect 5.1, the seniors entered, edited, and published their recollections into a bound chronicle.

The seniors were encouraged to volunteer and share their developmentally appropriate personal chronicles with a local Head Start class. The overall chronicle is available for regional or statewide dissemination.

Instruction was held two hours per day, two days per week for twelve weeks and two sessions were held throughout the year.

Transportation was provided by the Erie County LIFT and partially subsidized by Erie County Area Agency on Aging which is housed in the GECAC complex. The LIFT is operated by Erie County government and is the paratransit system for the elderly and the handicapped.

Evaluation procedures included the pre and post language sections of the TABE test. Student surveys, teacher observations, and student progress reports were noted.

Methods and Materials. A tutorial based approach to computer literacy was developed to use state-of-the-art computers and software. A thorough search of available materials was conducted by the teacher. All classroom materials were an appropriate mix of purchased and innovatively presented information. Other available materials to accomplish the program's objective will be developed by the instructor.

RESULTS OF PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Every senior that participated began with the same feelings of inadequacy and ineptitude. It was very difficult to recruit willing seniors as they did not want to be "embarrassed" by their lack of knowledge or were "afraid" that they couldn't work that "mysterious piece of machinery." As we gathered (and sometimes coerced) the seniors to participate, it was obvious that they loved talking about the past. We didn't bring up the word "computer" until they were comfortable being together and comfortable with the instructor.

The instructor began by testing each participant using the Mechanics and Expression and the Spelling sections of the TABE. She then reviewed basic writing and grammar skills. Two days a week the seniors would appear ready to discuss the assignment for that week. As their knowledge of mechanics and expression were renewed, they demonstrated an increased awareness of proper grammar, spelling, and usage. The students became ultra critical of every piece of mail they received and every article they read. They would bring in every mistake they found in the correspondence they received and would even call the local newspaper to bring every misspelled word printed to their attention. Their attendance was exemplary. As they became acquainted with each other, their questions would spark recollections and they would reminisce about downtown Erie and specific locations of Erie County. They would often get into a controversy over a date or a location of a historical site.

Ms. Annita Andrick, Librarian and Archivist for the Erie County Historical Society, was a guest speaker for the seniors. She spoke about the many historical sites in Erie County and truly sparked an interest in each of the participants to visit the sites and learn more about our local history. Her speech stimulated many recollections for the seniors. They were now ready to begin their writings. As will be evident by the enclosed end product, the seniors produced some absolutely wonderful stories. They so enjoyed verbalizing and writing their recollections. It inspired each of them to go on to the next step--THE COMPUTER.

As they walked into the computer lab and sat down, they all looked rather pale. The fear of this machinery was overwhelming for some of them. The instructor took her time and painstakingly went over the basics of how the computer worked. She stressed that they were in control of the computer and not the computer in control of them. As the course progressed, the students became more comfortable and asked very relevant questions. The instructor could see the mystery of the computer (or computer phobia) being replaced with a sincere desire to learn as much as they could in the time allowed. The students could actually see the practicality of the computer. Several seniors expressed how they wished they had "these things" when they were young.

The outcomes of this project were many in terms of increased self esteem and a true desire to learn more about the local history and computer literacy. The participants increased an

average of 2.5 grade levels as measured by the Mechanics & Expression and Spelling sections of the TABE. The seniors discovered they could learn something very new and were quick to tell anyone who would listen about their newly acquired knowledge. One 80-year-old senior participant had been the editor of her school newspaper. She could now see the significance of how important the computer would be in this endeavor. A 78-year-old gentleman senior was absolutely amazed that he could produce something on one of "them/there" machines. Another participant, a 70-year-old African American woman who had grown up in the heart of Mississippi was so inspired by the class that she decided to do a history of her childhood for her children. This project truly reinvested these seniors in the love of lifelong learning.

GECAC TRAINING INSTITUTE

WRITING SKILLS - GRAMMAR

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The objective of this course is to increase by at least one grade level over the duration of the project the basic language/writing skills of seniors, aged 65 or older, as measured by the language sections of the TABE.

This course is designed to improve the basic language/ writing skills of these seniors enrolled. Computer literacy as well as basic word processing skills will be taught. Instructional activities will be centered around the seniors' recollections of their past experiences. Their recollections will serve as the medium for stories to be reproduced on the computers. These stories will be gathered into a bound chronicle of personal experiences to be shared with selected Head Start classrooms.

As part of the basic language/writing skills program, the seniors will complete activities designed to eliminate grammatical errors made in spelling, punctuation, capitalization and sentence structure. The seniors will then apply the basic rules of spelling, punctuation, capitalization and sentence structure to selected writing topics which will be recollections of their past experiences. The seniors will write on a different topic at each class meeting. Their writings will be critiqued and returned to them for correction and revision. Students will

be taught to critique their own work and to revise sentence and paragraph structure until the final revision is clear and concise. The final revision will then be reproduced on the computers.

OBJECTIVES:

To have the seniors edit problems in a sentence and restructure each sentence with correct usage and mechanics.

To learn the rules of grammar.

To apply the rules of grammar to increase one's ability to speak clearly and be understood.

To learn to write grammatically correct sentences that clearly expresses one's ideas.

To organize one's thoughts in a sequence that makes one's writing coherent and easily understood.

To learn the 5 step writing process.

To learn to embellish one's ideas by using additional details in a clear manner when writing.

To provide seniors with many topic suggestions that will utilize their recollections of the past.

To teach the seniors how to edit their own writing and ways to revise their writing.

To improve the seniors' spelling abilities by learning appropriate spelling rules.

COURSE OUTLINE

I. GRAMMAR

A. Usage

B. Sentence Structure

C. Mechanics

Assignments: Complete the exercise in the following instructional books: English Essentials, a Refresher Course Book and Developing Writing Skills.

Instructional method: Tutorial

Evaluation:

Students turn in the completed exercises and within 2 or 3 days it is corrected and returned to the student. The instructor meets with the students to review incorrect answers and to give instruction and additional assignments when needed.

II. SPELLING

Assignment: Take one spelling list everyday. Write each word three (3) times and hand in completed exercise, using Gateways to Correct Spelling.

Instructional method: Tutorial

Evaluation:

Check weekly writing assignments for correct spelling. Proofread all written work for spelling accuracy.

III. WRITING:

A. The Five (5) Step Writing Process

1. Generating Ideas
   Assignment: In small groups - brainstorm a topic

2. Organizing Ideas
   Assignment: Make a list and categorize all ideas brainstormed.

3. Writing the Story
   * use supporting ideas, reasons and explanations with each succeeding paragraph.

   Assignment: Complete a writing assignment on a specific topic that is a recollection of a past experience.

   Assignment: Embellish an original writing assignment.

4. Revising the Writing Assignment
   * Look for any spelling or grammatical errors.

   Assignment: Make any necessary changes in the writing assignment.

5. Editing the Writing Assignment
   * Re-read; look for problems with phraseology and organization.

Assignment: Re-write with changes in final form. This exercise is repeated on a weekly basis. Examples of topics for the writing assignments.

Instructional Method: Tutorial
Small Group discussion:
Brainstorming ideas.

Instructional Materials: Writing Frames, 40 Activities for Learning the Writing Process.

Evaluation:

Weekly writing assignments are corrected by the instructor and returned to the seniors. Corrections are discussed, revisions made and assignments are re-written if necessary. Writing assignments are then in final form to be taken to the computer room for typing.

PERFORMANCE BASED LEARNER OUTCOMES

At the successfully completion of the Writing Skills-Grammar portion of the course, the students will be able:

To know and correctly use the rules of grammar.

To speak with clarity and be easily understood.

To write a story using systematic, sequential approach to organizing thoughts.

To write sentences that are grammatically correct and that clearly express thoughts.

To complete a writing assignment embellishing on an idea by adding details in an appropriate way.

To utilize spelling skills to communicate effectively in writing.

W O R D P R O C E S S I N G

Course Description:

A hands-on course designed to give the student a working knowledge of the Personal Computer and WordPerfect 5.1 systems. Students will be acquainted in a wide range of word processing tasks commonly performed in today's automated office.

Text:

101 Word Processing Exercises for WordPerfect 5.1.
Lloyd D. Brooks.

MAJOR GOALS

The Word Processing Course is designed to:

1. Train the student to become acquainted with word processing.
2. Train the student in the techniques of word processing.
3. Make the student aware of the necessity of proofreading and checking figures at source for accuracy.
4. Give the student experience in decision making.
5. Help the student determine job priorities.
6. Aid the student in identifying the major elements of a word processing system.
7. Show how industries utilize word processing.
8. Identify the career opportunities available as a result of office automation.
9. Show the new technologies that have been developed for the office.
10. Show the responsibilities of the originator with regard to the document cycle.

SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

After completing the course, the student should be able to:

1. Describe the role of word processing in the modern office.
2. Explain the difference between hardware and software.
3. Discuss the basic word processing functions.
4. List the broad classifications of word processing commands.
5. Use the enter/command keys.
6. Use a complete quick reference card.
7. Initiate the word processing programs.
8. Respond appropriately to program menus.
9. Position the cursor to the screen.
10. Scroll text both horizontally and vertically.
11. Enter text onto screen.
12. Correct errors using the overtype or insert function.
13. Delete text from a document.
14. Insert text within a document.
15. Print single or multiple copies of document.
16. Select print options available on a particular system.
17. Print documents on single sheets or continuous paper.
18. Save a newly created or edited document to disk.
19. Load an existing document from disk storage.
20. Use status lines.
21. Set and change margins.
22. Set tabs and indentations.

23. Enter text using regular, decimal, and outline tabs.

24. Enter text.

25. Set line spacing

26. Reformat text.

27. Set, save, and multiple format lines.

COURSE CONTENT OUTLINE

I. WORD PROCESSING CONCEPTS

A. What is Word Processing?
B. Word Processing on Wang and IBM Systems
   1. Wang Word Processor
   2. IBM Word Processor
   3. System administrator
   4. Systems components
   5. Word processing main menus
   6. Acceptance block
   7. Cursor
   8. Cursor position keys
   9. Execute/Enter and Cancel keys
   10. Documents names/numbers
   11. Screen concepts

II. BASIC WORD PROCESSING

A. Creating and Printing a Document

   1. What you need to know before you start
   2. Document logs
   3. Word processing main menus
   4. Creating libraries on Wang systems
   5. Making a menu selection
   6. Creating a document
   7. Typing a document
   8. Exiting/ending a document
   9. Printing a document

B. Locate Keys
   1. Locate Key
   2. Previous and next screen
   3. Go To key
   4. Cursor position keys
   5. Backspace key

C. Formatting a Document
   1. The format/status lines
   2. Format keys

D. Basic Text Editing
   1. Text editing
   2. Strikeover
   3. Inserting text
   4. Deleting text
   5. Highlighting text

E. Printing

1. Printer
2. The daisy printer
3. Paper feed
4. Print document menu
5. Printing selected pages
6. Restarting a page
7. Printing draft style
8. Canceling a print request

"Exploring The Past"

A Senior Writing
and
Computer Workshop

The following reminiscences have been prepared by a very special group of Seniors here at the GECAC Learning Center. We are indeed fortunate to have the opportunity to share in their special memories. These personal recollections and others like them provide a valuable and entertaining link to the past and promote an understanding and appreciation of our common heritage.

Thank you, Seniors!

Sharon Kalbaugh

Mary Miles

Instructors

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"GOOD OLE DAYS"

I remember when children obeyed their parents without questions. I remember when a pound of hamburg would feed a family of five. I remember when we baked our own bread, but if we bought a loaf it was ten cents. Butter was fifteen cents a pound. Eight O'clock coffee was three pounds for eighteen cents, and you ground it yourself.

Most families grew their own veggies, but if you went to the A & P at nine on Saturday nights, you could buy baskets of over ripe fruit for a quarter.

Those were the so called "Good Ole Days," but were they? It depends on how you look at it. There was less crime! Why? Because men got up at dawn to do the chores before going to work. Women got up with the men to cook breakfast and get the children up for school. They walked some of them for miles.

The women cooked, cleaned, and washed clothes (some with the wash board). A few had washers that were powered by hand. Then they hung the clothes in all weather on lines in the yard. Supper was cooked and dishes washed in a dish pan and dried by hand and put away. By then, the family was too tired for anything but bed. That's why there was no crime.

Today--we have all kinds of electric gadgets, such as stoves, microwaves, electric irons, no-iron materials, cars, buses, vans, TV's, stereo walkmans, and telephones. Everything is to make life easy and with the extra time we drink, do drugs, and get food from stores or quick serve restaurants. There is time to get into trouble, and crime,-- plenty of it.

We don't want to go back to the "Good Ole Days," but wouldn't a "Happy Medium" help?

Marian Wood

MEMORIES FROM PHOTOS

In the years of growing up, photos of people and places provide good and happy memories. They are a link to the present, past, and future. The photos are wonderful treasures and keepsakes. They are a legacy that we can pass on to other people. Treasured photographs are a means of sharing with our family and friends a part of our lives. Photos bring to us laughter, sadness, sunlight, and showers.

I have a nephew who took a photography class at the University of Delaware. He restored photos of my mother, grandmother and grandfather in their early stages of growing up. The restoration was a lot of work, but the photos are a special joy and keepsake for me. What a joy on a sunny or rainy day to leaf through a photo album.

Jane Sparks

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READING MEMORIES

READING MEMORIES

The book Alice in Wonderland comes to mind as one of the first story books I ever read. This was usually in the early evening or something to do before bedtime. School homework came first, and then it was outside to either roller skate, or just talk to your school friends or neighbor friends on the front porch.

Naomi Rilling

READING MEMORIES

As a teenager, I enjoyed reading the Nancy Drew books. They were a series of books with a sense of mystery. I still love the Nancy Drew books in my collection at my home. I wonder if the Nancy Drew books would be popular today?

Jane Sparks

HOMETOWN MEMORIES

MEMORIES OF DOWNTOWN ERIE

Downtown Erie at Christmas time was a very exciting place for a young child. One stop we all made was to see Santa Claus at the Boston Store. He was a jolly man in a red velvet suit with a hearty laugh. There were several big stores in downtown Erie: Traska, Halles, Stacys, Lerners and many five and dimes.

Catherine Gustafson

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THINGS I REMEMBER VISITING IN DOWNTOWN ERIE AS A CHILD

The thing I remember most as a child is getting five cents for a street car ride and going downtown. We would go to the Boston Store and meet some friends under the big clock in the middle of the store. After we met our friends we would walk down to the lake and watch the boats. There were also horse- drawn wagons that would go from house to house delivering milk and baked goods.

On Saturday my grandmother would take the street car and go to the market. My sister and I would meet her at the street car stop with our wagon to bring home the goods that she bought. It was a lot of fun.

Lorinda Jenkins

MEMORIES OF VISITING ERIE

I remember as a young, teenage girl I used to come over to Erie and spend a weekend with a girlfriend. She originally lived in Union City but later moved to Erie because of work.

In the wintertime, we would spend the evening skating at the rink over at the market on East 12th and State Street. Every minute of it was enjoyable.

In the summertime, a block of Second Avenue in Union City would be closed off and we would skate at home. The neighborhood kids would all get together to skate.

To finish off the weekend, in the morning we'd get up and go to church, and after dinner we'd visit until it was time to go home. Then we would go to the bus station and she would see me off.

Bess Martin

My memories of the Villa Maria Academy
1948-1952

I remember going to Villa during my high school years and meeting many new friends. Our homeroom as a Freshman was in the old part of the Villa Convent and it was called the Latin Room. We had to change classes and you had five minutes between classes; sometimes you almost ran to get to the next class. At the time I went to high school, the Villa College, grade, and high school were all in the same building along with the Convent for the Sisters of Saint Joseph.

Most of our classes were held in the new part of the Villa called Gannon Hall. We had all our business courses on the top floor; shorthand, typing, and bookkeeping. I always remember the college lab across the hall which sometimes smelled like rotten eggs. The college students also had their classes in the same building. Some college students also boarded at the school, and their rooms were on the second and third floors.

We wore uniforms, and I always remember the white collar and cuffs, (which my mother starched) along with our blue dresses that the collars and cuffs were attached to. We did not have all the modern conveniences such as computers or even have television sets. I would go to my girlfriend's house to watch some programs, as we didn't have a TV set.

Many times all my friends and I would walk over to Pulakos Bakery on 11th and Liberty Street (which is now the Salvation Army Building) for a treat before catching a bus home. Then other times we would walk all the way to State Street and go to the Boston Store for a "Cherry Coke" before catching our bus.

Margaret Pinczewski

GROWING UP IN ERIE

Growing up in Erie has many fond memories. As a child looking back, Saturday was the day set aside for going to the market and then going shopping. The Central Market House is open at 5 o'clock in the morning and stays open until the farmers have sold their produce. When going to the market my granddad would pick up my mom and they would go in the early morning. I was not always up that early. Upon returning from the market, the groceries, meat, and produce were put away. We would then have our lunch and get dressed up to go downtown, first by streetcar and then replaced by city buses. On a nice day we would sometimes ride the bus one way and walk home. The stores we went shopping in were The Boston Store and Trasks which are no longer in business or the buildings are no longer there. They were our large department stores in the downtown area. Going downtown was something that I looked forward to, and as time went on, I finally got to the age where I could work in one of the stores. You had to be sixteen to apply for working papers at that time. Saturday was the big shopping day, and the day the teenagers could apply for a job. Yes, I applied for a Saturday job at Benson's Dress Store and was hired. I enjoyed visiting, shopping, and working in downtown Erie.

Naomi Rilling

• GROWING UP IN CLEVELAND, OHIO

My early days were spent in Cleveland, Ohio, in the days of the depression era. We, as children in those days, didn't have much money, so our activities were in places that were free or that cost very little. We would ride the trolley to downtown Cleveland and walk through the markets and stores there. Also we used our 25 cent allowance to see the saturday matinees, which consisted of a cartoon, newsreel, and feature picture. The talkies were in full swing then and they were very exciting.

Elsa Ruth

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CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

When I was a child I lived in a town of 12,000 people. We had all kinds of sports and games to play with other children. In the summer we went on weekend field trips to parks and lakes. We also had summer concerts in the park.

Bill Satterlee

DOWNTOWN ERIE, 1950

As a young married lady, I came to Erie with my husband in the year 1950. I remember visiting downtown Erie and going to the Record Bar and purchasing our first radio, record player and carrying it to our home. There were two candy stores in downtown Erie: Putakos and Chaconas. At Easter there was always a large chocolate display in Putakos window. The Boston Store had a huge clock on the first floor and people would meet there under it. On the second floor of the Boston Store was the dining room and in the month of November the Boston Store would have a doll show. My daughter's birthday was in November and we would attend the doll show for lunch.

Jane Sparks

MY FAMILY WAS SHARE CROPPERS

In Georgia back in the 1920's we lived in a house, part was logs. We did not have light, and we did not have gas. We cooked on an iron stove and we did not have running water. We had to get water from a well. When I was a kid my sisters and I went to school, and we had to walk about three miles to the little red school house. It had two rooms and there were two teachers. In those days your parents had to buy your books, and after school we would have to get water and wood. Then we would have to go feed the cows and chickens. During the weekends, we played hide and seek, and we would play ball.

Ruth Williams

OSCEOLA MILLS

Osceola Mills is a small town in the center of Pennsylvania. I was born in the midst of the flu epidemic in 1918. I went to school and graduated there in 1936.

The industries were a brickyard, clay mines, and coal mines. My father was a railroad block operator. Sometimes he would take us with him to work. It was, to us, in the middle of the woods. There was a stream where we could swim or fish.

My town had two grocery stores, a drug store, and until the fire, a hardware paint store. We never knew what happened, but the hardware store, burned and took a whole block with it. Paint cans exploded and it seemed to burn forever.

The story of how our town got its name was that Chief Osceola sat on a log behind what was to become our school. The Mills was added later for identification.

Marian Wood

A FAMILY TRADITION

The dictionary says that a tradition is a belief or custom not written on paper which is handed down from generation to generation. For example in some families it is a tradition to say grace before meals. Many families hang stockings on Christmas Eve or eat turkey and stuffing on Thanksgiving.

My family has certain traditions. One I especially like is lighting a bayberry candle Christmas Eve for good health and wealth for the coming year. Christmas Eve we get together to share our love and feelings for each other.

I think the tradition started when our children were quite young. Traditions are important because they are part of our heritage.

Jane Sparks

PERSONAL "FAVORITES"

A VERY SPECIAL FRIEND

This very special friend came into my life June, 1980. He was a Schnauzer puppy, named Skipper. He was 6 weeks old. Skipper had to be fed, trained to go outside, and trained to get used to his new home, "The Playpen". The Playpen was quite an experience. We finally got to the point where he was introduced to his bed. By now he had learned to relate to who was speaking to him for his attention.

We played, we walked, and we went bye-bye in the car. He is now a grown dog, and we are the best of friends.

Naomi Rilling

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MY FAVORITE MONTH

My favorite month of the year is April because a great deal happens in this month. The weather is refreshing and comfortable so I can enjoy walking and other outdoor sports. The flowers are blooming and birds are singing. In addition to this it is a time of renewal. Frequently Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and Easter are in the month of April. During this month my family helps me celebrate my birthday and also my younger son's birthday. I look forward to this month every year.

Jane Sparks

MY FAVORITE PET

My son gave me a tiny puppy one year. I called him Mickey. His mother was a Boston Bull Terrior, but his father was a traveling salesman. No one wanted Mickey.

Mickey was very bright and learned quickly. He learned to beg. When I was making sauce, he would sit by the stove. When we snacked in the evening Mickey was there too, begging for pop corn and Pepsi. He never missed a piece of popcorn and wanted his Pepsi right out of the bottle.

One day Mickey was hit by a car, but he still crawled in to my chair for popcorn and Pepsi. The next day I had to have Mickey put to sleep.

Marian Wood

I LIKE WORKING IN A DAY CARE CENTER

I love the babies; they are darling. You watch them grow. At first they are on the bottle, then they start to smile at you and before you know it they are crawling. After a month they begin to try to walk. Through all the crying and laughing it makes you feel good about yourself.

Ruth Williams

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TELEVISION

My favorite television station is WQLN. It has a lot to offer to everyone. There is a variety of programs such as travel, nature, music, and educational programs. We should support our local public television station for worthwhile programming.

Jane Sparks

WHAT I WORE TO SCHOOL.

We wore wool sweaters, coats, hats, gloves and long underwear. I lived in the mountains and it was very cold. We also wore high-button shoes. They were pretty; two-toned, black and taupe. We also had Marcel-waved hair. We wore nicer clothes for Sunday when we went to church; dresses, nicer coats, etc... We did not have jeans in my time.

Tess Kaminski

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STYLES BACK WHEN WE WERE YOUNG

When we were young we had to take good care of our clothes because our clothing was very limited. Young girls wore petticoats or full-slips instead of half-slips. The style for women was to wear fancy dresses and hats. Our stockings we wore were made of cotton instead of nylon.

Bess Martin

CLOTHING STYLES I WORE

Every Friday in junior high school we wore Middie Blouses of any color, matching long stockings, and saddle shoes. The classrooms were a blaze of all different colors. We called Fridays "Middie Day." It was my highlight of the week. We even had a song, "I am a Middie girl." It was such fun!

Elsa Ruth

CLOTHING FROM MY CHILDHOOD

As a child growing up we had three different kinds of clothing that we wore. We had school clothes, play clothes and clothes for church. We wore sandals in the summer time. For school we wore dresses and skirts and twin sweater sets. Our play clothes were our old school clothes. When we attended church we wore our very best clothes. As a girl we wore gloves, a hat, and carried a purse. In the winter we wore patent leather shoes, and in the summer we wore white shoes. The holidays were a special time to dress in your best. Easter and Christmas were always special holidays. Some of our clothing was made on a sewing machine by our mother with a matching hat or bonnet. As a child growing up, if you didn't have a lot of money you never felt that you were poor.

Jane Sparks

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FAMILY TRADITIONS

FAMILY TRADITIONS

As an only child our holidays were small and quiet. I had an aunt and uncle who lived in Conneaut, Ohio. They also had an only child so we were together for the holidays. We would alternate which home we would be at for that occasion.

For Thanksgiving we would go to the other home on Wednesday after our fathers returned from work, and our mothers would prepare dinner for the next day. My cousin Jean and I would go into the bedroom to play and keep out of the way. As young girls we played with baby dolls. As we grew older we played paper dolls which was our favorite game. Sometimes we played checkers or Chinese Checkers.

On Thanksgiving morning we would sleep until around 9 a.m. Our mothers would sleep in and we would prepare a small breakfast for our fathers while our mothers slept in.

When our mothers arose we kept ourselves busy and out of their way. We ate between 2 and 3 p.m. Our dinner was a traditional dinner; turkey and all the trimmings. My favorite was the pumpkin pie. After dinner Jean and I helped with the dishes. We would stay at the house until late Sunday and then we would return to our own home.

Christmas was very much the same, except Christmas Eve we went to Midnight Mass then home to bed and waited for Santa to arrive. Dinner was in the middle of Christmas Day. We had ham, meatballs, various salads, vegetables, relish tray, etc. This was our very special time of the year.

Ruby Farrell

FAVORITE TOYS, GAMES, OR AMUSEMENTS

MY FAVORITE CHILDHOOD TOYS

As a child I had two favorite dolls, a Lindy doll and a Betty Boop doll. My Lindy was called Lindy because Charles Lindberg flew his airplane across the ocean to Paris. When Charles Lindberg returned to America, people had a big celebration for him. He was famous. Betty Boop was a flapper. She appeared in movies and cartoons. She would say, "Boop, Boop." She had dark hair, wore a green dress, and had an hour-glass figure.

I have a hand-made cradle that is quite old. It was made in Altoona in the Altoona Railroad Shops and given to me be my grandmother. It is an antique. The word antique means old, from the past. I also had a dollhouse for my dolls and to entertain me. It was such fun to move the furniture around. These toys were a special part of my childhood.

Jane Sparks

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SPECIAL CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

When I was a child, we played things like mail carrier, hide and seek, and rope. But in those days we didn't have ropes, so we would use grape vines. In the summer, we would play ball during the day and at night we would play make-believe like cat and horse, ghost and goblins. Then we would be scared to go to sleep.

When I was about eight or nine years old, my aunt got a record player that you to had wind up to play. In those days, we didn't have radios or TV's.

My grandfather had a horse and buggy. We used to ride the horse. He was beautiful and red and could out run a train. Later on my uncle bought a car which he left at our house. We would push it up the hill so we could watch it roll down.

Ruth Williams

A FAMILY TRADITION

The first Christmas I remember was when I started school. I had a new mother and a new baby brother. I lived with my grandparents since I was 18 months old, when my mother died.

We always had a special dinner with two big roasting chickens and all the trimmings. We had a live tree which never had lights on it. Santa brought us some nice gifts. We got small toys, some clothes, and a "soup" dish with an orange, nuts, and candy.

Our family came from a small town. The church held a Christmas party for all the children and they would receive a box filled with candy. Over the holiday the Moose Club opened their doors, and all the children in town would go in one door and out the other. Santa would give them all a box of candy and an orange.

I often wonder if oranges were a luxury back then because it seemed that everyone received them as gifts. Christmas is very different now.

Marian Wood

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WHAT WE DID BEFORE TV

WHAT DID WE DO BEFORE TV

As a child I played baseball and basketball. I listened to radio every day. I studied my school lessons at night by kerosene lamps. Each night before bedtime my family would sing and have prayer. We had a family quartet. The family quartet had a broadcast each Sunday morning at 8 a.m. over Radio Station WENK Union City, Tennessee.

Richard Chambers

WHAT DID WE DO BEFORE TV

As a young child growing up in the late 1930's our home had no T.V. We had two grandmothers living with us. One was loving, caring and much fun. The other was just there. I had two favorite toys. One was a metal Scottish dog with rubber ears and the other was a metal cat; you pulled the tail down and it would run across the room and hit the walls. I also had many dolls. My two favorite were Snow White and Shirley Temple. I still have both toys.

As I grew older I became interested in sports. My dad took me to baseball games and swimming at the beach. Also at school sports became very important to me, as nine boys and another girl and myself formed a gang. Our favorite sports at this time were bicycling and football in the summer. In the winter we played basketball, ice skating, hockey, and jumping barrels.

Moving on to junior high, I now participated in sports as part of my extra curricular activities. Again playing tennis, track, volleyball, and basketball. In addition to my sports, I got and worked at my first job in a deli for 25 cents an hour.

Going on to high school I took pool and being competitive I raced but could never dive. My favorite sport was basketball and I was still playing until 1970. My son broke his hip at this time but we had another interest. My cousin was now playing football for the Buffalo Bills, as a tackle. This is when I started to watch T.V. I am still a Buffalo fan and go to Buffalo for at least two games a season. My life was far from boring without T.V. I had my family, sports, work and most important much love.

Ruby Farrell

WHAT WE DID BEFORE TV

I remember well what we did before TV. After school my brother and I turned on the radio to Amos and Andy, one of our favorite shows. I can also remember my mother giving us an orange to eat as we sat on the sofa listening to the radio show.

In the evening it was wonderful. We all sat in the living room after supper and listened to the radio. My father would read the paper and my mother would either fold up clothes or just sit back and relax. We would listen to such stories as The Green Hornet, Lux Theater, and Fibber Magee and Molly. My brother and I did our homework as we listened to the radio. It is a happy memory with all of us gathered together in the living room. We also listened to the Inner Sactum and the Mummers. They were scary stories but we enjoyed them very much. The Mummers was the last story we were allowed to stay up for and when it was over, my mother would say, "I am going to beat you both upstairs. The last one up is a donkey. "Since it was such a scary story, neither my brother nor I wanted to be the last one downstairs. One of us had to turn out the light and the radio. It seems that I was always last. Oh boy, was I scared running up the stairs to go to bed.

Madeline Geertson

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

During my grade school years in the 1930's, we did pretty much the same thing every day after school. After we got home and got something to eat, we would go out and play until about 5:00. Then it was in the house to tune in "Little Orphan Annie" on the radio. This was usually a continued series, but the best part came at the end of the program when the announcer would give out a special message which we would figure out with our decoder rings. After "Little Orphan Annie" came "Jack Armstrong", and then "All American Boy", another series.

Catherine Gustafson

BEFORE TV NEWS

On Sunday afternoon we would ride downtown so my father could get the baseball scores which were on a board, attached to a building at Sixth and East Avenue. A man with chalk would update the scores as needed, and if it was a really close game, we would park there for awhile.

Catherine Gustafson

WHAT WE DID BEFORE TV

In the summertime, we would take walks and play outdoors. We would play things like baseball, hop-scotch, and jacks. Our neighbors would come over to sit on the front porch and visit with us. In the wintertime, we would have a lot of the neighbor children in to make popcorn. Sometimes we would have a taffy pull which was a lot of fun. The neighbors had a phonograph and we'd play records, sing, and dance around. We also liked to play all kinds of card games.

In those days, we didn't do much reading because all we had to read by was oil lamps. We didn't get electric until I was about five years old. When we wanted to hear the news we had to go to the neighbors. We didn't get a radio until I was about six years old.

Lorinda Jenkins

WHAT WE DID BEFORE TV

Especially on Saturday evenings I always enjoyed the "Hit Parade Program". I had a notebook that I would write the songs down in as they announced them. I also liked the mystery programs, too. I know my family always enjoyed the news.

My mother and I loved to play the piano. I took lessons and was all ready for the recital when I got sick. After that I was unable to continue with my lessons. I had learned enough about music to put the notes on paper, like for the songs I would hear on the radio. I just wish I had my notebooks and the music that I had played.

I still enjoy listening to and playing music sometimes. Knowing music has helped me with my singing in our choir at church.

Bess Martin

LIFE BEFORE TV

Before TV there were a lot more outside activities. We had neighborhood baseball games, roller skating on the sidewalks, and hide-and-seek outside. Then when the evening came we listened in a group to the radio. We heard Burns and Allan, Jack Benny, and the Ed Sullivan shows. Afterwards there were the news and musical shows. We were really able to enjoy games of Monopoly and cards more than children do today. It was an interesting time to live.

Elsa Ruth

WHAT WE DID BEFORE TV

As a child growing up before there was TV, I remember jumping rope, roller skating, and bike riding. In my hometown, we had a swimming pool in the city.

I was born in the center of the state, Altoona, which was a railroad town. We used to see a lot of trains and would count the railroad cars as they went by. A couple of miles from Altoona is the world famous Horseshoe Curve. When we went to Horseshoe Curve, we hoped to see a train going around. It was always cool there on hot summer nights.

The Penn Alto Hotel was rumored to have had Abraham Lincoln visit and sleep there.

Jane Sparks

WHAT WE DID BEFORE TV

If the weather permitted, a group of us would hike out into the country. We would go about two miles out and back. When we were done hiking we would go back to someone's house and do different things. Some of the things we did were sit and sing while one of our friends played the piano, have a taffy pull and eat it, or cook and shell peanuts.

Only once a week our movie played. There were a lot of churches around. On Sunday we went to church and our young people grouped together and had outings out of town. A couple of our fathers would drive us to the town where our meetings were.

Marian Wood

CLOTHING STYLES FROM CHILDHOOD

CLOTHING STYLES FROM MY CHILDHOOD

When I was a little girl, my parents were poor and could not afford to buy me a lot of clothes. I wore sunsuits in the summer and little sleeveless dresses of that time, the 1930's. When I became a teenager I wore little dresses with belts that tied in the back. I hated them, especially when I went to high school. The other girls wore skirts and blouses or sweaters and saddle shoes. Some wore wide poodle skirts; some wore stockings or high socks. I felt out of place and embarrassed. I felt different.

I decided that summer to find some work to do to make some money to buy my own clothes. I joined a crop-picking club; you had to be 16. Every morning a pickup truck would park on the corner and pick up the kids in my neighborhood. We picked currants first, then strawberries, cherries, etc. I was as brown as a berry myself, and healthy looking. I made enough money to by some skirts, blouses, stockings, sweaters and one $25 war bond. My mother and father were both very proud of me and treated me special. I felt proud and good when I went back to school that fall.

Madeline Geertson

CLOTHING STYLES FROM MY CHILDHOOD

We had special clothes for school, church and play. For school we had a real nice dress and shoes. When we got home from school we had to change our clothes before we went out to play. Most of the time in the summer we had to go barefoot. For church our dresses and shoes were more dressy than our school clothes. Most of our dresses and slips were hand made.

In the month of May when I was in school we always had a Maypole dance. We had a chance that day to get all dressed up for up for that special event.

Lorinda Jenkins